

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 AGR-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-01 TRSE-00 CIEP-01 FRB-03

OMB-01 USIE-00 SIL-01 TAR-01 L-02 AID-05 NSC-05 SS-15

CEA-01 PA-01 PRS-01 H-02 /072 W

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R 110502Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5253

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PASS AGRICULTURE AND USIA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, EGEN, AS

SUBJ: MEAT RESTRAINT PROGRAM

1. EMBASSY NOTES AUSTRALIAN BEEF SHIPMENTS TO U.S. CONTINUE AT LEVEL WELL ABOVE RATE CONTEMPLATED IN PROPOSED VOLUNTARY RESTRAINTS. ACCORDING TO OUR RECORDS FIRST QUARTER SHIPMENTS WERE 98,534 METRIC TONS. SOME EASING EXPECTED IN SECOND QUARTER BUT RATE WILL STILL CONSIDERABLY EXCEED QUARTERLY AVERAGE CONTEMPLATED IN U.S. PROPOSAL.

2. THIS RAISES PROSPECT THAT CONTINUED DELAY IN REACHING AGREEMENT ON VOLUNTARY RESTRAINTS, AND SIMULTANEOUS HIGH LEVEL AUSTRALIAN SHIPMENTS TO U.S., WILL EVENTUALLY NECESSITATE IMPOSITION U.S. IMPORT QUOTAS. MOREOVER, GIVEN HIGH CURRENT LEVEL OF AUSTRALIAN SHIPMENTS, SUCH QUOTAS FOR BALANCE OF YEAR WOULD HAVE TO BE SET AT LEVELS ENFORCING PAINFUL REDUCTION FROM PRESENT AUSTRALIAN EXPORT LEVELS.

3. SUCH AN OUTCOME WOULD IN OUR VIEW CREATE SERIOUS POLITICAL AND PUBLIC OPINION REPERCUSSIONS IN AUSTRALIA UNLESS WE HAD

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MADE SUBSTANTIAL EFFORT TO PREPARE AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC FOR THIS

OUTCOME AND ENCOURAGED FULLER UNDERSTANDING OF WORKINGS U.S.
MEAT IMPORT PROGRAM AS WELL AS OVERALL WORLD BEEF
TRADE SITUATION.

4. IN ORDER TO ASSESS THE POSSIBLE NEED FOR IT TO PLAN SUCH AN
EFFORT AT PUBLIC EDUCATION, EMBASSY ANXIOUS TO OBTAIN BEST
GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT AND AGRICULTURE CAN FURNISH RESPECTING
CURRENT STATUS U.S.-AUSTRALIAN NEGOTIATIONS RE VOLUNTARY
RESTRAINT PROPOSAL AND LIKELIHOOD AND TIMING OF EITHER U.S.-
AUSTRALIA AGREEMENT OR ALTERNATIVELY IMPOSITION U.S. MANDATORY
IMPORT QUOTAS ON AUSTRALIAN BEEF.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTS BEST AVAILABLE GUIDANCE
ON PROSPECTS FOR AGREEMENT OR MANDATORY U.S. IMPORT QUOTAS.

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